



# McCone County

Circle, Montana 59215

March 25, 2013

COMMISSIONERS  
Box 199  
485-3500  
485-2689 (Fax)

## HONORABLE MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

CLERK & RECORDER  
Box 199  
485-3505  
485-2689 (Fax)

CLERK OF THE COURT  
Box 199  
485-3410  
485-3436 (Fax)

COUNTY ATTORNEY  
Box 58  
485-3530  
485-2306 (Fax)

JUSTICE OF THE PEACE  
Box 192  
485-3548  
485-2689 (Fax)

SHERIFF  
Box 201  
485-3405  
485-3464 (Fax)

TREASURER/  
SUP. OF SCHOOLS  
Box 180  
485-3590  
485-2689 (Fax)

Representative Jerry Bennett, Chair  
Representative Virginia Court, Vice Chair  
Representative Jerry Eck  
Representative Wylie Galt  
Representative Ed Lieser  
Representative Mike Miller  
Representative Ray Shaw  
Representative Kerry White

Representative Pat Connell, Vice Chair  
Representative Alan Doane  
Representative Steve Fitzpatrick  
Representative Brian Hoven  
Representative Ryan Lynch  
Representative JP Pommichowski  
Representative Wendy Warburton  
Representative Kathleen Williams

**RE: AMENDMENTS TO SB 278, RATIFY C. M. RUSSELL NATIONAL WILDLIFE  
REFUGE WATER COMPACT**

**FROM: The McCone County Board of Commissioners**

Dear Members of the House Natural Resources Committee:

The McCone County Commissioners hereby voice our opposition to Representative Bill Harris's amendment to SB 278. Commissioners and landowners from the six counties surrounding the CMR have been meeting with the Water Compact Commission and the CMR Refuge for the past year and have come to an agreement that we can all live with.

We object to this amendment because with or without this compact anyone wishing to file a new water right on the Musselshell would have a slim chance, if any of obtaining one. Everything we have heard throughout the negotiating session is that there is no water left to appropriate in the Musselshell River.

If this amendment were to go forth, ignoring what we all have agreed to through this process, the CMR may not be willing to renegotiate. The 2013 priority date that has been agreed to could revert back to the 1936 priority date. The cost of the legal fees when the CMR takes individual rights to water court would be up to the individual landowners, who will have to defend their right to water that they have had access to for decades.

Please oppose this amendment and any others that would hinder SB 278's original intent.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

The McCone Board of County Commissioners

ABSENT

James D. Moos, Presiding Officer

Connie Eissinger  
Connie Eissinger, Member

Janet Wolff  
Janet Wolff, Member